



Disclaimer

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LEA Self-Assessment Core Elements

Core Element 6:
Communication and Collaboration:

- 6.2: LEA facilitates meaningful parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities;
- 6.3 LEA partners with community stakeholders (including preschool, mental health, etc.) to enhance service provision to student and families.



Remember:

**“We are all apprentices in
a craft where no one ever
becomes a master.”**

Earnest Hemingway

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And don't believe old idioms...

**“You ~~can't~~ CAN teach
an old dog new tricks”**

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Developing Meaningful Relationships:

- Try to see/greet/work with parents in other arenas besides an IEP meeting;
- Let parents see you supporting students in activities outside of school;
- Contact parents to let them know when you see their child doing well at school;
- Make yourself available to meet with parents.

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- Send home parent newsletters;
- Use Social Media such as Twitter, Pinterest;
 - (Be mindful of Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.)
- Respond to calls or email in a timely manner;
- Send home surveys to get parent's opinions on training, IEP meetings, etc.;
- Don't "hide" from parents in social situations;
- When possible, don't be afraid to support parents at IEP meetings, even if your support is in opposition to other school member's opinions;
- Help be the parent's voice to support their child.

Parent Training Opportunities

- EC Parent Nights;
- Transition Fairs;
- Send parents to conferences;
- EC Parent Advisory Committee meetings;
- Sessions during school PTO/Open house nights;
- Presentations during community events.

Parent training suggestions

- "Big" Events a few times per year;
- Smaller events on a monthly basis;
- Pair up with surrounding districts or community agencies and bring in a presenter;
- Offer dinner or heavy refreshments;
- Keep to under two hours;
- Limit the scope of the training (i.e., grade spans, disability area, topic);
- Publicize on websites, social media, etc.;
- Give advance notice with reminders;
- Follow-up with short video clips on websites.

Topics for Parent Training:

- Transition and Post-secondary programs/opportunities;
- Autism;
- Down Syndrome;
- Anxiety;
- Academics areas;
- Executive functioning strategies;
- Organizational skills;
- Differentiated instruction;
- Instructional and Assistive Technology;
- Student Led IEPs;
- Handling homework at home;
- Behavior strategies;
- Inclusive practices;
- Sensory strategies;
- NC Testing Requirements;
- EC Law and Procedures (i.e., Developing IEPs)
- Social Skills;
- Adaptive or Daily living skills;
- Community Agency supports.

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Remember:

- It's about impact, not numbers;
- It's about building relationships;
- It takes time to build a training program;
- We're all in this together !

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Engaging Parents as Stakeholders

- Work alongside parents with community agencies;
- Meet with parent organizations;
- Create a Parent Advisory Committee.

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EC Parent Advisory Committee

- Who should be on the committee?
 - Ask schools for recommendations;
 - One per each school / region ?;
 - Ask specific parents to participate;
 - Seek participation through community agencies;
 - Team of Rivals?
 - Who are the influential parents in your community?
 - Who can most help promote and engage other parents?
 - Who can benefit from knowing more about the school system?

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EC Parent Advisory Committee

- Hold regularly scheduled meetings;
- Send out reminders;
- Build a flexible agenda;
 - Combination of "training" and problem-solving
- Serve as an active listener and facilitator;
- Take ideas and input seriously.

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EC Parent Advisory Committee

- Our 2015-16 activities:
 - Three meetings;
 - Sent out parent training survey via paper and Survey Monkey options;
 - Used parent suggestions to host an EC Parent Night event;
 - Involved parents in the development of our EC Department strategic plan;
 - Worked with parents to generate suggestions for future training opportunities.

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Engagement spreads....

- Implemented parent suggestions into our Annual Transition Fair;
- Hosted a presentation for WCS staff and parents with Sparrow Rose Jones;
- Working with parents on a pamphlet regarding what to expect at an IEP meeting;
- Helped a parent on the committee to straighten out driver's license issues with their son;
- Helping a community agency with training of law enforcement officials;
- Provided information for a parent attending a state advocacy meeting.

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Remember:

- It's about impact, not numbers;
- It's about building relationships;
- It takes time to build an ECPAC;
- We're all in this together !

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Community Partnerships:

- Have knowledge of and use community resources;
- Build networks that allow for strengthening partnerships and access to information;
- Develop and implement interagency agreements.

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Community Partnerships

- Two types:
 - Formal: Involves an MOA or MOU
 - Informal: Involves participation without formal commitment of resources.

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Have Knowledge of Community Resources

- Learn about the agencies and leaders in your community;
- Set up meetings to meet with agency representatives;
- Attend agency stakeholder meetings.

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Our Community Partners:

- Appalachian State University College of Education and various programs;
- Smoky Mountain LME / DayMark;
- Innovative Approaches / Watauga County Health Department;
- Watauga Opportunities;
- Bayada;
- Vocational Rehabilitation;
- Headstart;
- Children's Council/NC PreK;
- Music Therapists;
- CDSA;
- Individual contracted therapists;
- NC TEACCH;
- Parent to Parent support network;
- Watauga Parks and Recreation Special Olympics;
- Caldwell Community College;
- NC Department of Public Instruction.
- And many others who participate in our Transition fair, back to school fair, and other activities.

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Build Networks....

- Involve agency representatives in IEP meetings and other activities whenever possible;
- Let agency representatives see you supporting their agencies in activities outside of school;
- Be a support to agencies when they seek your help;

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- Stand up for agencies when they are under fire;
- Involve agencies through regularly scheduled EC Stakeholder meetings.
- Involve agencies in improvement initiatives;
- Search for opportunities for agencies and schools to collaborate and share resources.

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Interagency Agreements

- Work together to craft MOA's or MOU's;
- Get the blessing of legal counsel on any agreement;
- Revisit on a regular basis;
- Revise when necessary.

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Remember:

- It's about impact, not numbers;
- It's about building relationships;
- It takes time to build Community Partnerships;
- We're all in this together / It Takes a Village !

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Questions ?

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If any questions or if you have any ideas to share:

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